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3 Parties Enliven Capital

By DAISY CLELAND
Star Staff Writer

A Washington afternoon looking in at parties can be a thrill:

You can meet a real spy, test your intelligence with a man who says that the moon is an arid area and we'd better look into it, and meet again the widow of one of our real heroes, who's living here and asking friends in for a pleasant afternoon.

To start with the first—Chief of Protocol Angier Biddle Duke gave a reception yesterday in honor of Mr. Eric Erickson, a Swede and one of the greatest World War II spies.

Mr. Erickson, a tall, square-set Norseman with graying blond hair and electric blue eyes, said today, "I do nothing—and I do it very well."

Gave Tip

However, he it was who tipped off the United States that a German submarine fleet was headed for this country's coastal waters to launch a bombing attack on our Eastern cities.

Mr. Erickson recalls:

"I was in the oil business in Sweden (a neutral). We bought from anybody, from Russia, the United States, England—so I got put on the 'black list' (this list was made up by the allies involving people who dealt with the axis forces.)

"I have never agreed that I should have been on that list. I was an OSS man and I still argue even this morning—but it was the Mr. Surrey, your OSS man, who told me how to get off the black list. I proved myself—and that is how I became the man you ask about."

Walter Surrey, a lawyer in Washington today, was at the party last evening. He headed the Economic Warfare Division of the OSS in Sweden and helped Mr. Erickson show his proof.



Walter Surrey (left), head of the OSS in Sweden during World War II, talks with Mr. Eric Erickson (center), a spy during the war—upon whom the film "Counterfeit Traitor" is based—and Angier Biddle Duke, chairman of the Washington committee of the Overseas Press Club, during a reception last night at the National Press Club. The party was given by Mr. Duke in honor of Mr. Erickson. Mr. Duke is chief of protocol.—Star Staff Photo.

Had to Have Business

"It was hard to get into Germany," Mr. Erickson said. "One had to have business. We thought of the idea that if Germany should possibly loose the war she would like to have a nest egg in enterprise somewhere, so why not Sweden?"

"We suggested this to the Legation, thinking that the refinery business with their oil fields was a good thought. We would go on a trip through Germany to look at their potential and see what backing we could offer."

He went on the trip alone although a member of the German Legation had discovered his motives. Mr. Erickson was so informed by Mr. Surrey. Mr. Erickson went all through Germany looking at their oil supplies and the main lines of their defense and offense. He returned to tell Mr. Surrey and the United States just where bombs should be dropped for the end of Germany.

Last evening Mr. Erickson looked back on his wartime

drama and recalled his own opinion. "The British didn't want to bomb airfields or oil—they liked railroad sidings. I said, railroad sidings don't send bombs or launch invasions. Then one of your great American Air Force generals told his boys, 'Get the sidings, but if you happen to get a refinery or an air base, I don't think you will be reprimanded for that.'"

Mr. Erickson, now 72 years old, will see the premiere of a movie based on his story, "The Counterfeit Traitor," in New York on April 17 for the benefit of the Memorial Press Center of the Overseas Press Club, of which Mr. Duke is a member. The film will open here April 19 at the Ontario Theater.

Mr. Erickson suffered great personal loss during his exploits, ones that have extended to the present day. But asked if he would do this again, with a quick steel-blue glint in his eyes he says, "For that purpose, always again."